

Senate Agriculture Committee Confirms Secretary Designee Dennis Wolff

HARRISBURG (Dauphin Co.) — The Senate Agriculture and Rural Affairs Committee, chaired by Sen. Mike Waugh (R-28), unanimously confirmed Secretary of Agriculture Designee Dennis Wolff in a hearing Wednesday morning.

During the hearing, Wolff, a dairy farmer from Millville, had the opportunity to present opening and closing remarks to the committee, in turn, the floor was opened to the committee to ask questions of Wolff.

Waugh expressed support for Wolff during Wednesday's hearing.

"I am pleased to offer my support for Mr. Wolff as secretary of agriculture. I believe he is a qualified and knowledge-

able candidate who will work with us to further the broad cause of agriculture and related issues in this commonwealth," said Waugh.

In addition to owning and operating Pen-Col Farms, a 700-acre, 500-head dairy farm in Millville that specializes in breeding purebred Holstein cows, Wolff is a director on five agricultural-related boards. Wolff is a member of the World Trade Organization's Agricultural Technical Committee, which provides input from the grass-roots level on WTO agricultural policies. Wolff also serves on the Penn State Board of Trustees and as president of Camp Victory, a nonprofit summer camp for children with disabilities and chronic illnesses.

The committee had also received a number of letters of support and endorsement for Wolff from several organizations, including the Pennsylvania Farm Bureau, the Pennsylvania State Grange, and the Hardwood Lumber Manufacturers Association of Pennsylvania.

Since his nomination by Gov. Ed Rendell at the 2003 State Farm Show, Wolff has been meeting individually with senators in addition to taking on the daily responsibilities of the secretary of agriculture.

With confirmation from the committee, only a vote from the full Senate is necessary for Wolff to officially serve as secretary.

Dairy Alliance Sets Calf Sense Workshops

UNIVERSITY PARK (Centre Co.) — Newborn dairy calves stand at a fork in the road on the day they are born.

Calves that are born on a farm with a good newborn management system get started on the path to life, health, and future productivity. Those calves that are born on a farm with poor or inconsistent newborn management face a path where death and disease wait to destroy their health and productivity. The path your calves take depends on your management system in the first days of life and the skill and commitment of the people who care for them.

A new Dairy Alliance program called "Calf Sense" is designed to help you get your calves off to a healthy start. Calf Sense is a hands-on, intensive program that teaches dairy managers and employees the science and skills they need to start calves out right. The core of the program teaches skills such as testing colostrum quality and conducting a basic health exam. Participants learn concepts and then practice with actual equipment and calves to

master the knowledge and skills they need. This method of learning reinforces people's commitment to caring for calves the right way every time.

In addition to learning such critical skills, Calf Sense also teaches participants how to set up a management system so that calves are treated right every time. A book filled with standard operating procedures (SOPs) that can be adapted and used right away is part of the learning materials provided to each participant.

Berks County Cooperative Extension and Scattered Acres Dairy hosted the most recent Calf Sense. Participants were enthusiastic about the quality of the program.

Future Calf Sense programs are planned for the central Susquehanna area on April 17, and for the Blair County/Morrison's Cove area on April 18.

For more information, or to register for Calf Sense, call the Dairy Alliance office at (888) 373-PADA. Visit the Dairy Alliance website at www.dairyalliance.org.

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